

ALLEN BUCKNER.

JANUARY 29, 1897.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House and ordered to be printed.

Mr. KIRKPATRICK, from the Committee on Invalid Pensions, submitted the following

REPORT.

[To accompany S. 3324.]

The Committee on Invalid Pensions, having considered the bill (S. 3324) granting an increase of pension to Allen Buckner, adopt the following from the Senate report, and recommend the passage of the bill:

Allen Buckner enlisted in Illinois on the 28th day of August, 1862, as major of the Seventy-ninth Illinois Infantry Volunteers, and served in that capacity until the 1st day of January, 1863, when he became colonel of the regiment. In this capacity he served until June 20, 1865, when he was honorably discharged.

On May 9, 1863, he was wounded at Rockyface Ridge, Georgia, by a minie ball, which entered his right side just above the hip bone, passing downward and backward to the left, coming out on the dorsal ilium about 4 inches from the vertebral column. For this he was granted a pension June 12, 1865, at the rate of \$10 per month, which was increased September 30, 1867, to \$22.50 per month, and again increased May 21, 1873, to \$30 per month, which rate he has enjoyed ever since.

At the battle of Murfreesboro, during the last days of December, 1862, and the first days of January, 1863, while in command of the regiment, he was compelled to sleep between two rails, with the rain pouring down upon him. He had only a rubber blanket for a covering. The result was a severe inflammation of the eyes, as indicated by the regimental surgeon's report. This difficulty has increased until now the man is blind in one eye, and it is impossible for him to see more than a few inches with the other. He applied for an increase because of this increased disability, and because of his inability to earn a support by manual labor. The reports of the various examining boards have found that the condition of his eyes is as stated. This disability can be better appreciated by reference to the report by Dr. Joseph W. McKee, hereto attached and marked Exhibit A. The claimant asked for an increase of pension in 1891 because of this new disability, and the Commissioner rated the new disability at \$15, making a total of \$45; but as there was no intermediate grade between \$30 and \$50 which would include this case, the Commissioner could not under the law increase the pension beyond the rate he was then drawing—i. e., \$30.

Since then this man's condition, as evidenced by the various reports on file with the papers in the Pension Bureau and with this committee, is such as to justify an increase of his pension. It is shown beyond doubt that the man is wholly incapacitated for the performance of manual labor, and his eyes are in such condition as to necessitate the constant aid of someone in piloting him about.

The wound in his side is of such a nature as makes it impossible for him to sit down for more than a few minutes at a time. He can not ride in a conveyance or on a horse, and is barely able to hobble about.

He has nothing with which to support himself but the small pension which he now draws, and has no one upon whom he can depend for assistance. He was a brave soldier, as is evidenced by a statement from Brig. Gen. R. W. Johnson, under whose command Colonel Buckner served for a long time. This statement is hereto attached and marked Exhibit B, and is made a part of this report.

After giving due consideration to the foregoing facts, your committee is of the opinion that the claimant ought to be rated at \$50 per month, and recommend the passage of the bill.

EXHIBIT A.

PHYSICIAN'S AFFIDAVIT.

STATE OF MISSOURI, *County of Jackson, ss:*

In the pension claim of Col. Allen Buckner, late of 79th Illinois Infantry Vol.

Personally came before me, a notary public in and for the aforesaid county and State, Joseph W. McKee, a citizen of Kansas City, Jackson Co., Mo., whose post-office address is 329 Rialto B'ld'g, Kansas City, Mo., well known to me to be reputable and entitled to credit, and who, being duly sworn, declares in relation to the aforesaid case as follows:

That he is a practicing physician, and that he has been acquainted with said soldier for about seven years, and that he has treated him (Col. Allen Buckner) for chronic inflammation of both eyes and eyelids. The eyelids had been thickened, affecting the mucous membrane lining the lids. This had been so severe and of such long standing that it caused cicatricial contraction and incurvation of the eyelids, thus turning the eyelashes inward against the cornea and eyeball. The constant rubbing against the cornea caused frequent ulceration of it and cloudiness of the cornea.

This long-standing disease is liable to produce destructive inflammation of the cornea and cause partial or total blindness in both eyes. He (Col. Allen Buckner) is totally disabled from all manual labor.

The foregoing statement was written by me, and I did not use and was not aided or prompted by any written or printed statement, or recital prepared or dictated by any other person, and not attached as an exhibit to this testimony.

He further declares that he has been a practitioner for 12½ years, and that he has no interest, either direct or indirect, in the prosecution of this claim.

JOSEPH W. MCKEE, M. D.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 25th day of November, A. D. 1896, and I hereby certify that the affiant is a practicing physician in good professional standing; that the contents of the above declaration, &c., were fully made known to him before swearing, including the words erased and the words added, and that I have no interest, direct or indirect, in the prosecution of this claim.

[SEAL.]

JAMES G. YOUNG,
Notary Public, Jackson Co., Mo.

EXHIBIT B.

Copy of statement written by Gen. R. W. Johnson.

This is to certify that Col. Allen Buckner, commanding the Seventy-ninth Illinois Volunteer Infantry, served under my command for some time during the war. This regiment was a fighting regiment, and the gallant Buckner was always at its head. I do not remember ever having seen a braver or more gallant man than Buckner, and I could always find him if I sought the post of danger. During the war he was afflicted with sore eyes, but he never left his regiment on that account, nor do I believe any cause short of death would or could have induced him to leave his gallant regiment under the command of another. Several times he had, temporarily, the command of his brigade and he always handled it with ability.

I was in the habit of referring to him as my fighting colonel. He deserves well of his country for the faithful, brave, and gallant service he rendered it in the great rebellion, which he did so much to suppress.

R. W. JOHNSON,
Brig. Gen., U. S. A., late Brig. Gen. Vol.